

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION

Minutes of the 179th Meeting

May 6, 2003

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Minutes of the 179th Meeting
(subject to approval of Commission at 180th Meeting)

Burpee Museum of Natural History
737 North Main Street
Rockford, Illinois

Tuesday, May 6, 2003 - 10:00 a.m.

179-1) Call to Order, Roll Call and Introduction of Attendees

At 10:10 a.m., pursuant to the Call to Order of Chair Allread, the meeting began.

Carolyn Grosboll gave the roll call.

Members present: Jill Allread, Kristi DeLaurentiis, Harry Drucker, Dr. Ronald Flemal, Jill Riddell, Bruce Ross-Shannon, John Schwegman, and John Sommerhof.

Members absent: Barbara Carr.

Chair Allread thanked everyone who participated in the 40th Anniversary Celebration at Cliffbreakers in Rockford, and she thanked the Natural Land Institute (NLI) for their efforts in putting this celebration together. She stated that Jerry Paulson and his team, particularly Jill Kennay, did a wonderful job hosting this event.

Jerry Paulson stated that NLI contracted with Dr. Michael Jeffords to have a photo display made commemorating the INPC's 40th Anniversary. He stated that the full display of photos was not yet available, however, a portion of the exhibit is on display at the Burpee Museum. He stated that the Burpee Museum is hosting this exhibit through the month of May. Mr. Paulson introduced Mr. Lew Crampton, President and CEO of the Burpee Museum of Natural History.

Mr. Crampton welcomed the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) to the Burpee Museum of Natural History. He invited everyone to see "Jane," the celebrity dinosaur that has been featured on CNN, in the *Chicago Tribune*, and in the world-wide media. He also wanted to acknowledge the leadership in the Rockford community of Bruce Ross-Shannon and Jerry Paulson. He stated that the Burpee Museum is very supportive of the INPC's efforts in protecting natural areas.

Carolyn Grosboll stated the Commission is pleased to have Dr. Brian Anderson in attendance. Dr. Anderson is a former Director of the Commission. He served as Director from 1985-1995, then went on to do wonderful things within the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Dr. Anderson was recently appointed to be the Office Director for the Office of Resource Conservation (ORC).

Dr. Anderson stated it is a pleasure to be back. He stated that, on behalf of Director Brunsvold, he wanted to thank the Commissioners and Commission staff for the great work that is being done. He stated that he has a formal request of the Commission. With the Commission's permission, he would like to request that Director Grosboll serve on the ORC Executive Staff.

Chair Allread thanked Dr. Anderson for attending the meeting, and she stated that the Commission looks forward to working with him.

Others present: Loretta Arient, Steven Byers, Judy Faulkner Dempsey, Bob Edgin, Carolyn Grosboll, Randy Heidorn, Tom Lerczak, Don McFall, Tammie McKay, Angella Moorehouse, John Nelson, Kelly Neal, Debbie Newman, Debbie Reider, Kim Roman, and Mary Kay Solecki, INPC; former INPC Director Brian Anderson, Todd Bittner, Tim Kelley, Glen Kruse, Brian Reilly, Patti Reilly, Anne Mankowski, Todd Strole, Bob Szafoni, and Diane Tecic, ORC, IDNR; John Arient, Land Management, IDNR; Randy Nyboer, Illinois Natural History Survey; David Thomas, INPC Advisor, Illinois Natural History Survey; former INPC Director Karen Witter, Illinois State Museum; Sue Dees, Barb Traeger, and Gary Welton, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT); David Miller, Illinois Audubon Society (IAS); Ken Fiske, INPC Consultant and former INPC Chair; John White, INPC Consultant; Jill Kennay, Sue Merchant, Rebecca Olson, and INPC Consultant Jerry Paulson, NLI; Sue Harney, Dundee Township, representing Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie Nature Preserve; Dennis Kessler, Fel-Pro Family, representing Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve; Bruce Boyd and Mike Baltz, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), representing Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve and Grassy Slough Land and Water Reserve; Brad Woodson, McHenry County Conservation District, representing Buffer Addition to Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve and Goose Lake Marsh Land and Water Reserve; Barrie and Shirley Hunt, representing Warbler Woods Nature Preserve; Judith Joy, former INPC Commissioner; Fran Lowman, Wild Ones Native Landscapes; Hala Ahmed, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission; June Keibler, Dundee Park District; John Alesandrini, Ken and Rita Martin, George Rose, Martha Schwegman, and Virginia Scott.

179-2) Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by DeLaurentiis, and carried that the Agenda be adopted.

179-3) Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting, February 3, 2003 and the 178th Meeting, February 4, 2003

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Schwegman, and carried that the Minutes of the Special Meeting, February 3, 2003, be approved.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the Minutes of the 178th Meeting, February 4, 2003, be approved.

Chair Allread reported that at the 178th Meeting of the INPC, held at the IDNR Building in Springfield on February 4, 2003, legal protection for ten tracts of land totaling 596 acres was approved by the Commission. Five of the ten areas are owned by private individuals or not-for-profit conservation organizations who donated the value of the protection agreement to the public. The dollar value of the five tracts of private land is \$293,000, based on conservative estimates of the fair market value of the land. This private land was permanently preserved without acquisition of the land by the State. Private lands protected without State acquisition at the 178th Meeting of the INPC include Sandy Creek Bluffs in Marshall County, 153 acres; addition to Paintbrush Prairie Nature Preserve in Cook County, 1.5 acres; addition to Sundrop Prairie Nature Preserve in Cook County, 2 acres; addition to Hopewell Hill Prairies Nature Preserve in Marshall County, 5 acres; and McCoy Woods Nature Preserve in Tazewell County, 28.7 acres. A total of 190 acres of private land was protected. Protection of this land came about because the INPC has eight staff in the field working with private landowners. There are now 315 dedicated nature preserves in 79 counties totaling 42,699 acres and 84 land and water reserves in 45 counties totaling 24,340 acres.

179-4) Next Meeting Schedule

Carolyn Grosboll stated that due to budget constraints projected for fiscal year (FY) 2004, a suggestion was made to combine the 180th and 181st meetings. The 180th Meeting of the INPC has been rescheduled for September 16, 2003, at 9:00 a.m. The Meeting will be held at the Brookfield Zoo, Brookfield, Illinois. Recommendations for the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) land acquisitions will be discussed at that meeting.

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Ross-Shannon, and carried that the amended meeting schedule be approved.

180th Meeting, September 16, 9:00 a.m. - Brookfield Zoo, Brookfield

179-5) INPC Staff Report

Carolyn Grosboll stated the General Assembly is set to adjourn on May 23, 2003; however, there is much work to be done on the budget which may force the members to stay in Springfield longer. Governor Blagojevich gave his budget address on April 9, 2003. The proposal includes significant cuts in all State agency budgets as well as a 5% service fee on all special funds, including the NAAF. It is estimated that this fee will amount to \$467,000. No cuts have been suggested to the Commission's lump sum amount. The Governor's proposal also calls for the transfer of \$144 million in special funds to the General Revenue Fund. The special funds targeted have not been identified at this time. She stated that Commission staff are continuing to monitor this situation.

Ms. Grosboll stated that several field staff have planned special celebrations commemorating the Commission's 40th Anniversary. Debbie Newman in Area 7, Judy Faulkner Dempsey in Area 9, and Mary Kay Solecki in Area 6 have all planned events in their Areas.

Debbie Newman stated that she has a 40th Anniversary celebration planned for Saturday, May 31, 2003, in Prairie du Rocher, Illinois. There will be a private reception and light lunch starting at 11:00 a.m., and a public event will be held at Brickey-Gonterman Memorial Hill Prairie Nature Preserve near Prairie du Rocher at 1:00 p.m. She asked that people contact her at 618-684-3840 for more information regarding this event.

Judy Faulkner Dempsey stated that she has a 40th Anniversary celebration planned for Saturday, September 20, 2003, in Ullin, Illinois. The program will begin at 9:00 a.m. at the Henry Barkhausen Visitors Center at Cache River State Natural Area. She asked that people contact her at 618-684-2660 for more information regarding this event.

Mary Kay Solecki stated that she has a 40th Anniversary celebration planned for September 20-21, 2003, in Champaign, Illinois. This event will be held in conjunction with the Central Illinois Prairie Conference at Parkland College. She asked that people contact her at 217-688-2622 for more information.

John Nelson reported on three ongoing threats to nature preserves and land and water reserves in northeastern Illinois and one new threat in Will County. He stated that the topics he will be discussing involve: Exner Marsh Nature Preserve in McHenry County; Redwing Slough Land and Water Reserve in Lake County; Bluff Spring Fen Nature Preserve in Cook County; and Long Run Seep INAI site in Will County.

Mr. Nelson stated that he presented a certificate of appreciation from the INPC to Henry Cilley for his efforts to save the Blanding's turtle at Exner Marsh Nature Preserve. The ceremony took place at one of the artificial nesting sites at Exner Marsh Nature Preserve and was attended by Henry's family and friends. *Chicago Wilderness Magazine* sent a reporter to cover this ceremony, and representatives of local newspapers also attended. Mr. Nelson stated that Henry's parents asked that he extend to the Commission their appreciation for recognizing their son for his hard work in protecting this Nature Preserve. Mr. Nelson stated that Dave Miller, President of the Illinois Audubon Society, presented Henry with the Youth Conservationist of the Year Award. Brad Woodson, McHenry County Conservation District also attended the ceremony. The McHenry County Conservation District will be in charge of maintaining the nesting sites and studying them. A mitigation fund in the amount of \$20,000 has been set up by the Army Corps of Engineers, and it has been targeted to study these nesting sites.

Mr. Nelson stated that there has been a boundary intrusion at Redwing Slough Land and Water Reserve. Redwing Slough Land and Water Reserve was purchased by the IDNR to protect the breeding and nesting grounds for wetland dependant birds. There have been intrusions into the Land and Water Reserve boundary by residents of an adjacent residential development. When this residential development was proposed, the IDNR strategy was to have a 300-foot buffer around the Slough to prevent this type of intrusion from happening. Since the 178th Meeting of the INPC, a second letter was sent to each landowner. The first letter was a cease and desist order shortly after the intrusion was discovered. The second letter included cost estimates for fencing and seeding the

areas of impact. The fence is needed to protect the boundary from future intrusions. It was thought that a split-rail fence would be something that would work well with the landowners. The cost estimates range between \$1,400 and \$4,440. There is a negative easement that is placed on the IDNR property that is in favor of the adjacent landowners in regard to a view over the IDNR property. There is also language in the deed restriction that precludes putting up permanent structures on the IDNR parcel. The landowners are now bringing this up, and they do not want a fence. A meeting is being planned with the landowners, the INPC, and the IDNR legal council in the near future to resolve this issue. There is language in the deed restriction that would allow the INPC to enforce the construction of a fence.

Carolyn Grosboll further explained that the deed says that no structures are to be built on the Illinois Department of Conservation parcel, which is now the IDNR. However, the restriction goes on to say, "provided that the restrictions do not prohibit the Department from managing the area in accordance with natural area management." Because this area is a land and water reserve, as part of its natural area management, a fence is authorized under the Rules for Management for Nature Preserves. It is felt that because there is the proviso in the restriction allowing for natural area management, a fence or some sort of a barrier delineating the boundary can be allowed. She stated that most of the landowners are amenable to doing something, but they are not supportive of a split-rail fence. Further discussions will take place to find something that meets the needs of both the landowners and the INPC. The negative easement allowing for an unobstructed view of Redwing Slough was placed on the IDNR parcel when the IDNR acquired the property.

Mr. Nelson stated that the threat at Bluff Spring Fen Nature Preserve is from an adjacent deep underground mining operation. He stated that this threat issue has required the full attention of Director Grosboll, Steven Byers, Randy Heidorn, and himself. Randy Locke of the Illinois State Water Survey and Jim Miner of the Illinois State Geological Survey are also helping to evaluate this threat. There have been several meetings with Bluff City Materials, and there have been several conference calls. He stated that a Fen Protection Plan is being developed. At the INPC's request, the mine entrance has been located away from the northern boundary which is closest to the Nature Preserve. A groundwater model needs to be completed. Bluff City Materials has reported that they have already spent approximately \$150,000 on a groundwater model. With the input of Mr. Locke and Mr. Miner, it was concluded that the groundwater model that was proposed was not sufficient. Bluff City Materials has been asked to provide more funding to finish the groundwater model. The second item of concern is the maximum groundwater discharge into the mine portal. Consequently, the portal will be grouted so that it will only have a maximum discharge of 50 gallons per minute, and it will be maintained for the life of the mine. It has been requested that Bluff City Materials do long-term monitoring of groundwater wells, as well as surface water bodies around the Nature Preserve. The long-term monitoring will allow for quick detection of any problem with the groundwater feeding the Fen. Mr. Nelson stated that Steven Byers has been working closely with Bluff City Materials staff over the years regarding a restoration plan. Bluff City Materials has agreed to help fill in three mine pit lakes on the Nature Preserve in the near future and help to restore some of the groundwater hydrology within the Nature Preserve. Bluff City Materials will provide most of the equipment, and there is funding available to do more restoration work through sources that

Mr. Byers has found. Underground culverts have been proposed to deal with the high water discharge and sediment coming into the Nature Preserve. In Addition, Bluff City Materials has committed to trying to acquire the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) property located east of the Fen. He stated that the INPC is working with MWRD to see if they are willing to sell the property to Bluff City Materials. This property is critical to the recharge of the fen.

Commissioner Drucker asked if there have been discussions on how Bluff City Materials would fund the cost of maintaining the groundwater discharge over the life of the mine.

Mr. Nelson stated that the majority of the cost will be the initial costs associated with the grouting. The more discharge that goes into the portal, the more Bluff City Materials has to spend to pump it out. He stated that Bluff City Materials is going to spend the resources necessary to grout the portal and supply data to the INPC so the Commission is comfortable knowing that Bluff City Materials is not exceeding that maximum discharge.

Mr. Nelson stated that the threat to Long Run Seep INAI site was brought to the attention of the INPC approximately a week ago. He stated that he has not visited the site as of this date. Dan Kirk, District Heritage Biologist (DHB) for the IDNR, and Dan Ludwig, Natural Heritage Regional Administrator for the IDNR, provided pictures of the threat. Long Run Seep is located in Will County, along the Des Plaines River. The main feature in Long Run Seep Nature Preserve is the calcareous seeps. The Hine's emerald dragonfly is a federally listed insect species that is known to live in the Des Plaines River corridor. The main population of the Hine's emerald dragonfly is at Lockport Prairie, however, it is suspected that the Hine's emerald dragonfly historically lived at Long Run Seep. The area of impact is not in Long Run Seep Nature Preserve, but it is in the INAI site that is proposed to become part of the Nature Preserve. This impact was detected during boundary surveys that were to lead to the formal dedication.

Carolyn Grosboll stated that the IDNR owns the 40 acres that have been dedicated as Long Run Seep Nature Preserve, and they recently acquired an additional 40 acres where the encroachment has occurred.

Mr. Nelson stated that there is a horse stable operation along the boundary of the INAI property. Dump trucks have brought fill in, and a bulldozer has been used to push the fill into the wetland. He stated that Mr. Kirk estimated that between 2-3 acres of this INAI site have been filled with 8-10 feet of soil, dirt, concrete, metal, and whatever else these trucks have brought in. An additional acre is being used by the adjacent landowner as a horse pasture. Even though this has not intruded directly into the Nature Preserve, it could have impacts on the Nature Preserve. He stated that the area of impact will be quantified using a Global Positioning System and mapping. The landowner has already contacted Director Grosboll.

Ms. Grosboll stated that the horse stable operation structures are not in the INAI site. The IDNR received funding to do legal surveys, and the surveyor and the DHB were walking the site when they came across the intrusion. The trucks were there dumping the fill. The landowner was

there, and the surveyor and the DHB spoke with her. After showing the landowner the maps that the surveyor had just completed, she acknowledged that she had gotten onto IDNR property. The landowner contacted the INPC right away, and she was very concerned about what she needed to do to correct the problem. Ms. Grosboll advised the landowner that the fill would probably need to be removed, and the landowner was concerned about the cost associated with that. The IDNR legal council will be sending the landowner a letter advising her what needs to be done in order to rectify the situation. The landowner has stopped all activities on IDNR's property.

Commissioner Sommerhof asked if this landowner was charging people to bring in the fill material.

Mr. Nelson stated that he did not think the landowner charged to have the material brought in because it is difficult to find a place to deposit fill material. The landowner wanted this area filled in to expand the horse stable operation, and she was probably receiving this material at no charge.

Commissioner Drucker asked if the Commission staff or the IDNR contacts by mail all of the adjacent landowners of INAI sites to let them know they are a neighbor of an important natural area.

Mr. Nelson stated that, to his knowledge, this is not done.

Ms. Grosboll stated that such notification was discussed during the INPC strategic planning session. A newsletter for adjacent landowners was discussed to notify them of the significance of adjacent land.

Commissioner Riddell asked if this landowner would have been in violation of any other statutes even if she had owned the land.

Mr. Nelson stated that more than likely she would have been in violation of other statutes by bringing this fill material in. She would need a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers to do this activity if this is a jurisdictional wetland. He stated that it was his opinion that since this property is so close to the Des Plaines River, there must be a surface hydrology connection. Other agencies will be contacted regarding this matter, with the Army Corps of Engineers being the first agency contacted. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will also be contacted because of the Hine's emerald dragonfly. The amount of fines because of this action could be very severe. Even though it is not a nature preserve, it is a high-quality wetland. In these kinds of situations, the mitigation ratio can be as high as 5 to 1.

Don McFall submitted the following written report to the Commission: Mr. McFall reported that Kim Roman's office has been moved from Silver Springs State Park to Tri-County State Park. Her new phone number is 847/608-3100, Ext. 2038.

Mr. McFall reported that a new Natural Heritage Landmark has been enrolled. Debbie Newman enrolled Harry's Prairie Natural Heritage Landmark, a 110-acre site in Monroe County. The site is owned by Harry and Linda Gravlin of Redbud. The new landmark protects high-quality loess hill prairie and habitat for three endangered species of plants. There are now 130 Natural Heritage Landmarks totaling more than 5,700 acres. He stated that Debbie Newman met with the newly formed Metro-east Volunteer Stewardship Network and developed a list of projects and volunteers. She also attended a meeting to discuss the potential for establishing a new land trust in the metro-east area.

Judy Faulkner-Dempsey assisted TNC in their successful acquisition at a public auction of the Lovet's Pond Natural Area in Jackson County. Ms. Faulkner Dempsey was responsible for getting information on the auction along with advising TNC of the importance of the natural area, encouraging TNC to attend the auction, contacting the attorney for the landowner, contacting the realtor, and working with local constituents. Mr. McFall stated that Ms. Faulkner Dempsey continued work on coordinating and writing the Environmental Assessment for natural area management in the Shawnee National Forest. Ms. Faulkner Dempsey also wrote comments for the INPC on the final draft of the Shawnee National Forest Plan Revision, and she participated with the Shawnee Riders on a public "thank you" to the Forest Service for closing Lusk Creek to equestrian use.

Mr. McFall stated that Bob Edgin wrote the natural community and vegetation sections for 31 natural areas to be included in the Environmental Assessment for prescribed burning in the Shawnee National Forest.

Mr. McFall stated that he and Mary Kay Solecki gave presentations to the Conservation Police Officers (CPOs) in IDNR Region 3 (east central Illinois) at two separate district meetings. INPC programs, regulations, and law enforcement needs and issues were discussed. This was an effort to improve communications with CPOs by providing them with updated information on nature preserves and land and water reserves in their counties and getting their opinions and advice on law enforcement issues. He stated that Ms. Solecki also participated on a committee to seek compensation and mitigation from the University of Illinois (U of I) for an ammonia spill that resulted in a fish kill in the Saline Branch and Salt Fork of the Vermilion River. Portions of the Salt Fork that were affected are on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI). The entire length of Salt Fork in Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve was affected. Negotiations between the IDNR and the U of I are ongoing.

Mr. McFall reported that most of the field staff wrote or coordinated NAAF stewardship grant proposals, C-2000 grant proposals and/or United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program grant proposals to fund land management projects on nature preserves and land and water reserves.

Mr. McFall stated that several staff attended the Illinois Invasive Species Symposium at Illinois State University on April 5, 2003.

Randy Heidorn submitted the following written report to the Commission: Mr. Heidorn stated that a total of 332 Special Use Permits were processed for 153 people at 145 sites as of April 29, 2003. Special Use Permits are required for the research projects and groups larger than 24 people, and they are reviewed and approved by the INPC field and central staff, the IDNR, and the landowner of the particular site.

Mr. Heidorn stated that a deer management plan has been submitted and approved for Franklin Creek State Park in Lee County, which includes Franklin Creek Nature Preserve. The IDNR presented evidence that deer were causing significant damage to the resources of the Nature Preserve. The three-year plan includes continued deer population and vegetation monitoring along with archery and firearm hunting.

Mr. Heidorn stated that the sampling of deer at Kinnikinnick Creek Nature Preserve in Boone County and surrounding areas is complete for this winter. A total of 129 deer were collected from the region, with 39 coming from the Kinnikinnick Creek Conservation Area which includes Kinnikinnick Creek Nature Preserve. Five of the 129 sampled deer were found to be positive for chronic wasting disease (CWD). An additional two suspect deer (other deer found to be exhibiting signs of CWD) were tested and found to be positive for CWD. This brings the total to 12 deer found to be positive for CWD in the region of Kinnikinnick Creek Conservation Area. Distribution of these positives and other data relating to the sampling efforts are being analyzed by the IDNR, and a full report will be available in the future.

Mr. Heidorn stated that he was appointed to a technical advisory committee by the Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) to help develop a policy on the management of mosquitos and the West Nile Virus on LCFPD lands. The LCFPD wanted to be sure that their policy protected both human health and the high-quality natural resources within their properties. The resulting policy and procedure was approved on April 18, 2003. The policy and procedure includes philosophies and approaches similar to those found in the INPC's Mosquito Management Guideline. A copy of the approved policy was distributed to the Commissioners.

The Volunteer Stewardship Network (VSN) Steering Committee met on Wednesday, April 30, 2003. The Committee approved its strategic plan and has begun the implementation of that plan. The Committee established several work groups to continue work on materials to enhance recruiting for the network, a directory of expertise, speaker lists, newsletter resources, and landowner needs. These materials will be placed in a reference kit that will be made available on the VSN web sites maintained as a part of TNC and INPC web sites. There were also discussions on creating a logo combining the INPC and TNC logo for the VSN. A landowner work group was assigned the topic of landowner liability, and they will report back to the VSN Steering Committee at a future meeting.

Mr. Heidorn stated that a \$285,157 Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Grant (Conservation and Reinvestment Act [CARA] Lite) was awarded for stewardship work on habitat. The project includes funds for five species recovery projects including the construction of bat friendly gates for caves; wetland restoration at the Cache River State Natural Areas; prairie

restoration at Starved Rock State Park; invasive species control projects at Green River State Fish and Wildlife Area, Iroquois County State Fish and Wildlife Area Land and Water Reserve, Pere Marquette Nature Preserve, and Pyramid State Park; and the development of vegetation management guidelines for the INPC. The project period for these projects is from April 8, 2003 - March 31, 2005.

Mr. Heidorn reported on land management activities performed by INPC staff. He stated that staff lead 15 prescribed burns as fire boss and participated as crew members in another 30 burns during the spring burning season. Four field staff conducted exotic species and brush control on nature preserves and land and water reserves. Angella Moorehouse conducted a census for Virginia bunchflower. Judy Dempsey prepared and presented comments to the U. S. Forest Service on the proposed control of Chinese yam (an invasive exotic plant) in the Shawnee National Forest.

Kim Roman and Kelly Neal participated in the annual Eastern prairie white fringed orchid recovery team meeting. Ms. Neal has also been participating in the Plants of Concern group with Chicago Wilderness and the Rare Plant Task force with the IDNR.

179-6) IDNR Staff Report

Glen Kruse reported on personnel changes within the IDNR. He stated that Joel Brunsvold has been confirmed as the new Director of the IDNR. Deputy Directors of the Department are Jim Riemer and Roger Frazier. Dr. Brian Anderson has assumed the position of Director of the Office of Resource Conservation. Dr. Anderson was formerly the Director of the Office of Scientific Research and Analysis. Jim Garner, former Deputy Director of the IDNR, retired from State service effective April 30, 2003. Tim Hickmann, former Deputy Director of the Office of Resource Conservation, has been appointed as Director of the Office of Land Management and Education. The hiring freeze imposed by Governor Blagojevich remains in effect, and there has been no action on the filling of positions left vacant by retirements over the past several months.

Mr. Kruse stated that donations to the Wildlife Preservation Fund (WPF) through the income tax check-off totaled \$170,202 as of May 2, 2003. This is approximately \$27,000 more than had been received by the same date in 2002. The WPF ranks second among the seven check-offs in donations received. Applications for project funding from the WPF were accepted through April 15, 2003. IDNR and INPC staff reviewed the 46 applications for small projects and the 46 proposals for large projects. Based on a budget of \$40,000 for small projects, 43 projects were recommended for funding in FY 2004. It is anticipated that approximately 19 large projects will be funded for a total of \$125,000. Projects recommended for funding by staff will be reviewed by a citizens' advisory committee before being presented to Director Brunsvold for final approval.

Mr. Kruse reported on land acquisition by the IDNR. He stated that the IDNR closed on 62 acres at Redwing Slough on February 5, 2003. This purchase was made with money from the NAAF. The IDNR closed on 198 acres at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area on April 7, 2003. This purchase was made with Open Lands Trust funds.

The 28th meeting of the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee (NAEC) was held on April 8, 2003, at the IDNR Building in Springfield. The NAEC meets quarterly to determine changes to the INAI. During this quarter's meeting, there were 39 INAI sites on the agenda for updates.

Four new sites were added to the INAI: Goose Lake Botanical Area - added as a Category II site in Bureau County; Haw Creek Sedge Meadow - added as a Category I site in Knox County; Brimfield Railroad Restoration Prairie - added as a Category III site in Peoria County; and Sandra Miller Bellrose - added as a Category III site in Logan County.

Four sites were deleted from the INAI: Partridge Creek Marsh - deleted as a Category I site from Woodford County due to hydrological alteration; Riverwoods Site - deleted as a Category II site from Lake County due to development; Tangley Oaks Woods - deleted as a Category I site from Lake County due to development; and Meyer Site - deleted as a Category II site from Adams County due to invalid report of listed species.

One site had a name change: Camp Benson in Carroll County was renamed Waukarusa Canyon because the INAI boundary spans several landowners.

There were 18 boundary expansions, five boundary adjustments, 13 addition of categories, one addition of category features, and one removal of category features.

Mr. Kruse explained the INAI categories. Category I: High-quality natural communities; Category II: Specific suitable habitat occupied by endangered and threatened species; Category III: State dedicated nature preserves; Category IV: outstanding geological features; Category V: natural community restoration and/or endangered and threatened species translocations; Category VI: unusual concentrations of flora and/or fauna; and Category VII: high-quality streams.

He stated that people should contact Patti Reilly at (217)557-9432 or preilly@dnrmail.state.il.us for more information about the INAI.

Mr. Kruse updated the Commissioners regarding the endangered species consultation program activity for January - March, 2003:

Actions January-March Quarter Pertaining to nature preserves and land and water reserves:

Received:	22
Opened:	3
Terminated after initial review:	11
Terminated after being opened:	3
Total open at the end of quarter:	82

Highlights:

Termination of Lake Point Center (Exner Marsh)

New Development Proposals near Bluff Springs Fen

All Consultations:

January-March Quarter:

Received:	1, 221
Opened:	152
Terminated after Initial Review:	1,071
Terminated after being Opened:	134

Present Status:

Pending Initial Review as of 5/5/03:	941
Initial Review Overdue as of 5/5/03:	786 (83%)
Currently Open as of 5/5/03:	875

Carolyn Grosboll stated for the record that the registration documents have been signed by the landowner prior to coming before the Commission as required by the administrative rules.

179-7) Adams Co. – Fall Creek Gorge Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Angella Moorehouse presented a proposal to register Fall Creek Gorge as an Illinois land and water reserve. The proposed 52.05-acre Fall Creek Gorge Land and Water Reserve consists of the northeastern portion of Fall Creek Gorge Scenic Overlook, owned and managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). The Overlook serves as a roadside rest stop, located off the Marblehead Exit to the south of Illinois Route 336, 12 miles southeast of Quincy. Found within the Galesburg Section of the Western Forest-Prairie Natural Division of Illinois, Fall Creek Gorge includes all but the southernmost 2 acres of the 16-acre site identified by the INAI (#148) as a high-quality natural community (Category I); having approximately one vertical acre of grade B limestone cliff. The state-endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) was observed on the site. The Illinois State Geological Survey has stated that the area is a “significant geological natural area because of the exceptional natural exposures of Burlington limestone.” The site also contains significant archeological resources. Professional archeologists will monitor the site on an annual basis.

Ms. Moorehouse stated that this fall the IDNR plans to have the first archery deer hunt at Fall Creek. The land is currently open to hunting, but this will be the first formal hunting program.

Commissioner Schwegman stated that he visited this area frequently when he lived in central Illinois, and he feels it is an interesting place.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Schwegman, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Fall Creek Gorge in Adams County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 7 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1709)

179-8) Cass Co. – Panther Creek Hill Prairie Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Tim Kelley presented a proposal to register Panther Creek Hill Prairie as an Illinois land and water reserve. The proposed Panther Creek Hill Prairie Land and Water Reserve, owned by the IDNR, is a 32-acre site within the West Open Unit of Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area. The proposed reserve contains approximately 10 acres of loess hill prairie representative of the Springfield Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. The area is included on the INAI (#111) due to the high-quality loess hill prairie and the occurrence of two state-threatened species, Hill's thistle (*Cirsium hillii*) and Ottoe skipper (*Hesperia ottoe*).

Mr. Kelley thanked Tom Lerczak for preparing the legal description for this site.

Commissioner Schwegman stated that he is very familiar with this site, and he feels it is worthy of preservation.

Commissioner Sommerhof asked if hunting will be allowed at this site.

Mr. Kelley stated that this property has traditionally been a conservation area which allowed hunting, and hunting will continue on this site.

It was moved by Schwegman, seconded by Flemal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Panther Creek Hill Prairie in Cass County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 8 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1710)

179-9) Coles Co. – Woodyard Memorial Conservation Area Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Mary Kay Solecki presented a proposal to register Woodyard Memorial Conservation Area as an Illinois land and water reserve. Woodyard Memorial Conservation Area is owned by the City of Charleston and protects 205.14 acres of forest, hill prairie, and river within the Embarras River watershed, Charleston received a C2000 grant from the IDNR to assist in the acquisition of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area occurs on the south edge of the City of Charleston in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. The Conservation Area

encompasses four tracts of land with distinctive natural features. The 36.2-acre hill prairie tract protects Waterworks Hill Prairie, recognized by the INAI as a high-quality glacial drift hill prairie (INAI #5). Waterworks Hill Prairie is the largest and best glacial drift hill prairie remaining along the Embarras River. The 135.9-acre woodland tract contains upland woods, flooded ravine/wetland habitat and lake shore frontage on Lake Charleston. The state-threatened plant false hellebore (*Veratrum woodii*) occurs in the woodland tract. The ridge tract is .4 acres of upland forest. The 32.6-acre river tract protects a .4-mile segment of the Embarras River, a biologically significant stream that provides important habitat for at least five species of state-threatened or endangered fish and mussels. The little spectacle case mussel (*Villosa lienosa*) and the harlequin darter (*Etheostoma histrio*) have been found in the Embarras River within .2-mile of the river tract. The river also provides habitat for the state-threatened or endangered eastern sand darter (*Ammocrypta pellucidum*), rabbitsfoot mussel (*Quadrula cylindrica*), and snuffbox mussel (*Epioblasma triquetra*). However, these species have not been found in the immediate vicinity of the river tract.

Ms. Solecki stated that the City of Charleston would like to create hiking trails in the Land and Water Reserve which is addressed in the management plan. There is an informal system of hiking trails on adjacent property owned by the City of Charleston.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Sommerhof, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Woodyard Memorial Conservation Area in Coles County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 9 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1711)

179-10) Johnson Co. – Grassy Slough Land and Water Reserve, Registration
(Actually presented after Item 13)

Judy Faulkner Dempsey presented a proposal to register Grassy Slough as an Illinois land and water reserve. The proposed Grassy Slough Land and Water Reserve includes 2,672.50 acres in Johnson County in extreme southern Illinois. The area is owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Of the 2,672.50 acres of the proposed Grassy Slough Land and Water Reserve, 2,268 acres are enrolled in the Cache River Special Wetland Reserve Program. The area has been restored to wetland habitat through the C2000 program. Six hundred thousand dollars has been invested in the restoration. Prior to the purchase by TNC, the entire site was planted annually to vegetables. Historically, the area was dominated by low, wet bottomland hardwood forest and swamps. Grassy Slough has long been considered an important tract for preservation because of its geographic location. The tract separates the Little Black Slough Unit of the Cache River State Natural Area (CRSNA) (7,764 acres) from the Lower Cache River Unit of the CRSNA (6,342 acres). With registration of Grassy Slough, the results will be an unfragmented 16,778.5-acre riparian corridor in conservation ownership. An equally important outcome of preservation of Grassy Slough is that

this is the site of the future reconnection of the Upper and Lower segments of the Cache River. This reconnection will be the key to restoring the structure and function of the river to a self-sustaining equilibrium and will help preserve a rich diversity of wetlands, forested swamps, and bottomland hardwood forests of the Bottomlands Section of the Coastal Plain Natural Division, an area which includes more than 100 species listed as threatened or endangered in the State of Illinois.

Ms. Faulkner Dempsey introduced Bruce Boyd, Director of the Illinois Chapter of TNC, and Mike Baltz, Southern Illinois Project Director for TNC.

Mike Baltz reported on management issues at Grassy Slough. He stated that there is a grand plan to reconnect the Upper Cache to the Lower Cache. There is a possibility that a small ditch will be cut from the Karnack Levee to allow the Upper Cache to flow into the old bed of the Lower Cache. Removal of some buildings is also a part of the management plan.

Mr. Baltz thanked Judy Faulkner Dempsey for her assistance in preparing the proposal and bringing this site before the Commission. He also thanked Carolyn Grosboll and Carl Becker for their efforts on this project.

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Schwegman, and carried, with Drucker abstaining, that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Grassy Slough in Johnson County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 10 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1712)

Chair Allread stated that this is a wonderful example of the teamwork with a great partner like TNC. She thanked Mr. Baltz and Mr. Boyd for attending today's meeting.

179-11) McHenry Co. – Goose Lake Marsh Land and Water Reserve, Registration
(Actually presented after Item 9)

Brad Woodson, McHenry County Conservation District, presented a proposal to register Goose Lake Marsh as an Illinois land and water reserve. The proposed Goose Lake Marsh Land and Water Reserve is 80 acres in size and is owned by the McHenry County Conservation District. The proposed land and water reserve is part of a larger land holding that totals 270 acres of wetlands and surrounding upland habitats that are characteristic of the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. The proposed land water reserve, known as Streets Lake on the INAI (#1274), was included on the INAI because of the presence of five state-listed wetland bird species. Those species include the state-endangered Black tern (*Chelidonias niger*) and the Yellow-headed blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*). The three state-threatened bird species include the Sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*), Pied-billed grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*), and Common

moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*). In addition to these state-listed species, the marsh supports a diverse assemblage of flora and fauna.

Steven Byers stated that the management plan allows the McHenry County Conservation District to have certain uses and to explore opportunities to restore the surface and groundwater hydrology of the site. There will be a waterfowl hunting program initiated at this site, and this is stipulated in the proposal.

Ken Fiske gave a brief history of this property and how the original owner wanted to have the land preserved. The original owner gave a conservation right on this property to the McHenry County Chapter of the Illinois Audubon Society in 1976 and it was held by the McHenry County Chapter of the Illinois Audubon Society until her death. At that time the property was turned over to the McHenry County Conservation District. Mr. Fiske stated that the original owner would be very pleased to have this land preserved.

Mr. Woodson stated that there is a potential groundwater threat to this property from a sand and gravel mining operation that was opened a few years ago. The sand and gravel mining operation is located approximately two miles to the southwest of the proposed land and water reserve. Monitoring wells have been installed.

Carolyn Grosboll asked if this threat is in the recharge area.

Mr. Woodson stated that it is not known if this threat is in the recharge area, but it is being analyzed.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Schwegman, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Goose Lake Marsh in McHenry County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 11 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1713)

179-12) Vermilion Co. – Kinney’s Ford Seep Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Bob Szafoni presented a proposal to register Kinney’s Ford Seep as an Illinois land and water reserve. Kinney’s Ford Seep is a 37.6-acre seep and forest owned by the IDNR and located within the Middle Fork State Fish and Wildlife Area in Vermilion County. This site contains a 3-acre, high-quality seep in the Vermilion River Section of the Wabash Border Natural Division that is recognized by the INAI (#1511). This proposed land and water reserve protects all of the high-quality seep owned by the IDNR and a portion of the recharge area for the seep. A smaller part of the Kinney’s Ford Seep Natural Area occurs on private land west of the proposed land and water

reserve. Kinney's Ford Seep has relatively high plant diversity that includes 182 native plant species. The site is located within a half mile of the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River, Illinois' only stream protected under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Mr. Szafoni stated that the proposal indicated that there were no state-listed species on the site, however, after further investigation, four-toed salamanders (*Hemidactylium scutatum*) have been found on the site.

Commissioner Ross-Shannon asked if this site would qualify as a nature preserve.

Mr. Szafoni stated that the site would qualify as a nature preserve, however, the area has been a fish and wildlife area which allowed hunting. It was unlikely that the IDNR would have given approval to stop the hunting program.

Commissioner Ross-Shannon asked for an explanation of the IDNR approval process.

Mr. Szafoni stated that the process starts with the local managers in fisheries, forestry, and wildlife, along with the land management site staff. The significance of the site is discussed along with what impacts it will have on existing programs and fiscal resources. After agreement is obtained at that level, it moves to the regional supervisors. The next level moves to Springfield where Patti Reilly moves the proposal through a review process within the IDNR offices. Ultimately the proposal goes to the Director of the IDNR for final approval.

Commissioner Ross-Shannon asked if there is a specific policy that designates what should be a nature preserve or a land and water reserve, or is it just a management decision that could change with the new Director.

Brian Reilly stated that there is no specific IDNR policy. The primary difference between a nature preserve and a land and water reserve is the hunting and fishing.

Don McFall stated that it is a consensus decision within the IDNR disciplines.

Mr. Szafoni stated that this is one of the sites that was part of a larger agreement between Commission staff and senior agency staff that the Department would seek to register all the Category I natural areas under its jurisdiction. This is the last Category I terrestrial site in Region 3 that is not protected either as a nature preserve or as a land and water reserve. Once this site is registered, the IDNR will have completed that task until it buys the next piece of property.

Commissioner Riddell stated that under the past IDNR Director, lands were not being dedicated as nature preserves but were being registered as land and water reserves. Since the IDNR has a new Director, she suggested that the Commission get out of the habit of just assuming that everything will be registered rather than dedicated. She encouraged the Commission staff to seek assistance from the Commissioners in revisiting that issue with the possibility that the IDNR might consider dedication in the future.

Carolyn Grosboll stated that she has had preliminary discussions with Dr. Anderson about this, and he is supportive of pursuing dedication on properties where there are no existing hunting programs and exploring further dedication of other properties as well. She stated that she will talk with Dr. Anderson about this again.

Commissioner Drucker stated that a policy may be helpful in determining whether a piece of land should be considered first and foremost as a nature preserve versus a land and water reserve. Any form of protection is better than no protection, but the characteristics of the resource itself should be the primary policy determinate as to whether or not something becomes a nature preserve or a land and water reserve. After that, the broader context of balancing the various recreational uses of the site should be considered. He stated that it is the job of the Commission to make sure that Illinois' remaining natural heritage is protected in the highest form available.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Ross-Shannon, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Kinney's Ford Seep in Vermilion County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 12 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1714)

179-13) Washington Co. – Sipple Slough Woods Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Diane Tecic presented a proposal to register Sipple Slough Woods as an Illinois land and water reserve. The proposed Sipple Slough Woods Land and Water Reserve is a 40-acre tract owned by the IDNR. It contains southern flatwoods and shrub swamp/pond natural communities representative of the Effingham Plain Section of the Southern Till Plain Natural Division and provides habitat for buffalo clover (*Trifolium reflexum*), an endangered plant species. Sipple Slough Woods is included on the INAI (#866). The proposed land and water reserve is directly adjacent to Chip-O-Will Land and Water Reserve, a 55-acre flatwoods site registered in 2001. The flatwoods at the proposed reserve is part of a 7,000 acres forest along the unchannelized portion of the Kaskaskia River. This is the largest unbroken block of forest in Illinois.

Ms. Tecic stated that the allowed uses of the site include hiking, mushroom collecting, and hunting. The site will not be officially open for hunting at this time because there is very limited access to the site. The IDNR is concerned about the potential for trespassing.

It was moved by Sommerhof, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Sipple Slough Woods in Washington County as an Illinois land and water reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 13 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1715)

A lunch break was taken from 12:05 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

179-14) Cook Co. – Addition of Nature Preserve Buffer to Sagawau Canyon Nature Preserve, Dedication

(Actually presented after Item 10)

Steven Byers presented a proposal for preliminary approval for dedication of an addition of nature preserve buffer to Sagawau Canyon Nature Preserve. Sagawau Canyon Nature Preserve is a 12-acre canyon with a high-quality dolomite cliff natural community (INAI #0256) that is owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC). Final approval for dedication of Sagawau Canyon was granted at the Commission's 99th Meeting in May, 1984 (Resolution #799). Both Sagawau Canyon Nature Preserve and the proposed 123-acre addition as nature preserve buffer owned by the FPDCC are located within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. The proposed addition includes 100 acres of dolomite prairie, 20 acres of dry-mesic forest, and 3 acres of graminoid fen that are being restored as part of a settlement agreement reached between the Chicago District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Material Service Corporation and administered by Corporation for Open Lands (CorLands). One element of that settlement agreement calls for the FPDCC to submit areas being restored to the INPC for formal protection.

Mr. Byers stated that Material Service Corporation provided funding, administered by CorLands, in the amount of \$477,000 to provide for restoration and management of portions of the 123-acre proposed addition. He stated that Commission staff also secured \$40,000 for restoration and management of the graminoid fen through the Northeastern Illinois Wetlands Account.

Mr. Byers acknowledged the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and Joe Roth with CorLands.

Ken Fiske, speaking as a representative of CorLands, stated that this a settlement that went through the Army Corps of Engineers for wetland restoration. CorLands has spent a great amount of time educating new staff at the Forest Preserve District of Cook County regarding this project.

Chair Allread thanked CorLands for their efforts in bringing this site to the Commission.

Commissioner DeLaurentiis stated that she is familiar with this area, and she is concerned about the potential impact to the Nature Preserve from some of the businesses in the area.

Mr. Byers stated that development in this area has been a long standing issue for many people in that region. It does represent a threat to the groundwater resources and surface water contamination. The development is some distance away, and it is downgradient from this particular site. He stated that the land use is incompatible with the protected land in that area.

It was moved by DeLaurentiis, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of an addition of nature preserve buffer to Sagawau Canyon Nature Preserve in Cook County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 14 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1716)

179-15) Iroquois Co. – Addition to Hooper Branch Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication

Kim Roman presented a proposal for preliminary approval for dedication of an addition to Hooper Branch Savanna Nature Preserve. Hooper Branch Savanna Nature Preserve is a 483-acre nature preserve owned by the IDNR and dedicated as a nature preserve in June, 1986. The IDNR proposes to dedicate 77 acres as an addition to the Nature Preserve. Hooper Branch Savanna Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are included on the INAI (#577) and contain dry sand savanna, dry mesic sand savanna, sand flatwoods and mesic sand prairie representative of the Kankakee Sand Area Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. The proposed addition is sand savanna, sand forest, and agricultural fields. Management plans for the proposed addition include reconstruction of shrub prairie and sand prairie in the old fields and prescribed burning in the sand forest and savanna.

Ms. Roman stated that the IDNR is planning to lease the fields for agricultural use for three to five years. This is being done for biological reasons, and it will generate revenue to go towards the restoration.

It was moved by Schwegman, seconded by Sommerhof, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of an addition to Hooper Branch Savanna Nature Preserve in Iroquois County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 15 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1717)

179-16) Lee Co. – Addition to Franklin Creek Nature Preserve, Dedication

Todd Bittner presented a proposal for preliminary approval for dedication of an addition to Franklin Creek Nature Preserve. Franklin Creek Nature Preserve is a 189.41-acre nature preserve owned by the IDNR and dedicated as a nature preserve in July, 1970 with additions in October, 1970 and May, 1996. The IDNR proposes to dedicate an additional 8.5-acre tract. Franklin Creek Nature Preserve is located in the central portion of Franklin Creek State Park and is included on the INAI (#1068). The Nature Preserve contains upland and floodplain forest, sandstone cliff, and hill prairie natural communities representative of the Oregon Section of the Rock River Hill Country Natural Division. The proposed addition contains dry mesic and mesic upland forest. With dedication of this addition the Nature Preserve will total 197.91 acres.

Mr. Bittner stated that the management for this addition will focus on reducing an over population of white-tailed deer by following an approved IDNR and INPC deer management plan. This is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2003. The deer population has reached unsustainable levels exceeding 150 deer per square mile, resulting in the local extirpation of much of the woodlands rich flora. Other management priorities include the control of exotic species, selective woodland thinning, and prescribed burning.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Drucker, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of an addition to Franklin Creek Nature Preserve in Lee County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 16 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1718)

179-17) Macoupin Co. - King Forest Nature Preserve, Dedication

Tom Lerczak presented a proposal for preliminary approval for dedication of King Forest as an Illinois nature preserve. King Forest, owned by Mr. Mitch King, is a 17.5-acre site included within the 40-acre Chaney Woods Natural Area (INAI #30), recognized on the INAI for a 37-acre, grade B, dry-mesic upland forest. The proposed nature preserve supports approximately 15 acres of the grade B forest plus 2.5 acres of grade C, dry-mesic upland forest, both of which are natural communities representative of the Carlinville Section of the Western Forest-Prairie Natural Division. The dry-mesic forest supports large canopy individuals such as white oak (*Quercus alba*), black oak (*Q. velutina*), shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), and mockernut hickory (*C. tomentosa*). The owner wishes to ensure the continued protection and proper restoration management of King Forest by having it dedicated in perpetuity as an Illinois Nature Preserve.

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of King Forest in Macoupin County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 17 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1719)

179-18) Randolph Co. - Prairie of the Rock Nature Preserve, Dedication

Debbie Newman presented a proposal for preliminary approval for dedication of Prairie of the Rock as an Illinois Nature Preserve. The proposed Prairie of the Rock Nature Preserve, owned by J. W. (Bill) Gonterman, is a 10-acre blufftop parcel overlooking the Mississippi River floodplain

and the town of Prairie du Rocher. Approximately 3 acres of the proposed nature preserve are included in the 80-acre Prairie du Rocher-South INAI site (#99). The Prairie du Rocher-South INAI site, located in the Northern Section of the Ozark Natural Division, contains a matrix of loess hill prairie, limestone bluff, and upland forest. The INAI site also contains the state-endangered Missouri coneflower (*Rudbeckia missouriensis*). The proposed nature preserve contains grade B & C loess hill prairie, grade A limestone cliff community, and grade C dry-mesic upland forest.

Ms. Newman stated that there is an old water tank that is being used as an alternative water storage tank for the Village of Prairie du Rocher, and it is being maintained by the Village. There is an access easement across the back of Mr. Gonterman's property where this tank area is located. A survey will be done to get the exact acreage for this site before it is brought back to the Commission for final dedication because it is possible that a portion of this water tank will be included on the proposed nature preserve.

It was moved by Sommerhof, seconded by Flemal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of Prairie of the Rock in Randolph County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 18 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1720)

179-19) Hancock Co. – Stony Hills Nature Preserve, Dedication

Angella Moorehouse presented a proposal for final approval for dedication of Stony Hills as an Illinois nature preserve. Stony Hills Nature Preserve, owned by Roger Batz and Gretchen Graft Batz of Elsah, Illinois, contains approximately 54.4 acres. The entire proposed nature preserve lies within the boundaries of Jamar Haven Land and Water Reserve. In 1999, the INPC approved registration of Jamar Haven as the 39th Land and Water Reserve (Resolution #1504). Stony Hills contains approximately 3.5 acres of the 5-acre site recognized by the INAI (#1645) as the Niota Geological Area. The Niota Geological Area was confirmed by the Illinois State Geological Survey as a Category IV geological site. The site contains significant geological and archeological features and habitat for a state-threatened reptile. The Commission conferred preliminary approval for dedication of this site at its 178th Meeting in February, 2003 (Resolution #1699).

Ms. Moorehouse thanked Brian Reilly for his assistance in preparing the legal description for this site.

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by DeLaurentiis, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants final approval for the dedication of Stony Hills in Hancock County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 19 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1721)

Chair Allread asked that Ms. Moorehouse send the Commission's regards to Roger and Gretchen Batz and let them know how much the Commission appreciates their protecting this very special area.

179-20) Kane Co. – Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal for final dedication of Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie as an Illinois nature preserve. The proposed 65.92-acre Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie Nature Preserve, owned by Dundee Township, is a mosaic of natural plant communities arrayed upon a rolling topography with diverse soil types, different exposures, and varying moisture regimes. The site was recently recognized by the INAI (#1625) for populations of the state-threatened Hill's thistle (*Cirsium hillii*). The populations of Hill's thistle are surviving elements of a dry prairie plant community, an extremely rare community in the State. Only 1.4 acres of high-quality dry prairie were identified on the INAI. In addition to the dry prairie plant community, elements of sedge meadow and graminoid fen wetlands also survive at the site. The proposed Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie Nature Preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. The Commission conferred preliminary approval for dedication of this site at its 178th Meeting in February, 2003 (Resolution #1700).

Sue Harney, representative of Dundee Township, thanked the Commission for its consideration of this site. She stated that she and June Keibler have been working on this project for approximately 20 years. She stated that it is her goal, before her term ends in two years, to see that all of the sites purchased by Dundee Township have some kind of permanent preservation that no future board can overturn.

Chair Allread thanked Ms. Harney for her persistence and perseverance in seeing this project to completion.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Drucker, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants final approval for the dedication of Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie in Kane County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 20 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1722)

179-21) McHenry Co. – Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal for final dedication of Fel-Pro Triple R Fen as an Illinois nature preserve. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) proposes to dedicate 96.63 acres (31.43 acres as nature preserve and 65.20 acres as buffer) to be known as Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve. A portion of the proposed nature preserve lies within a larger wetland basin recognized by the INAI as Detrana Fen (#1557). The proposed Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve is located within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. Five natural plant communities support 268 native plant species including the state-endangered green-fruited burreed (*Sparganium chlorocarpum*). The proposed 90.02-acre Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve is part of a 225-acre tract conveyed to TNC and the McHenry County Conservation District in 1999 by the Herz, Kessler, Lehman, Mecklenburger, Morris, Radov, Scholzman, and Weinberg families (the owners of Fel-Pro). The site was referred to by these families as the Fel-Pro Rest, Relaxation, and Recreation Ranch, hence the triple R designation. The balance of the site, and portions of the proposed Nature Preserve, will offer outdoor educational opportunities for the public and children enrolled in programs offered by Metropolitan Family Services. The Commission conferred preliminary approval for dedication of this site at its 178th Meeting in February, 2003 (Resolution #1701).

Bruce Boyd, representing TNC, stated that it was his pleasure to attend the 179th Meeting of the INPC. He stated that there is no more important partnership than the partnership that TNC has with the INPC. This partnership spans many years, and TNC looks forward to a strong relationship for many years to come. He stated that a number of years ago a group of farsighted owners of the Fel-Pro Company in Chicago sought to find a place that would be an amenity for their employees. They wanted to have a place for their employees to relax, rest, and recreate. The Fel-Pro Company became one of the best companies in the country for which to work. The place that the company bought for its employees was the Fel-Pro reserve. At the time, it was a lovely place in the middle of nowhere. Today, the site is enveloped by suburban development. When the company was sold a few years ago, the original owners of Fel-Pro donated the entire reserve to TNC and the McHenry County Conservation District. This area is one of the last remaining natural areas in this part of the State. He stated that he was pleased to introduce one of the owners of the Fel-Pro Company who was one of the farsighted people that made Fel-Pro the company that it was and saved this spectacular place, Mr. Dennis Kessler.

Dennis Kessler stated that there have been several generations who have loved this site. The property was acquired in the early 1970s, and the original plan was to create a place for the employees, their families, and friends. A naturalist was hired to walk the site, and he pointed out many things. They decided to preserve the natural area and place the day camp in the area that had already been farmed. The area was open to the employees year-round. The company was sold in 1998, and they entered a new partnership with TNC and the McHenry County Conservation District. He stated that this wonderful partnership will now be elevated by the Commission's action today. He thanked the Commission for considering this site for a nature preserve.

Commissioner Drucker stated that he indirectly worked for the Fel-Pro Company as a consultant several years ago. His firm was hired by Fel-Pro to do a distribution study. He stated that the consultants voted Fel-Pro Company as the best client.

It was moved by Schwegman, seconded by Riddell, and carried, with Drucker abstaining, that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants final approval for the dedication of Fel-Pro Triple R Fen in McHenry County as described in the proposal presented under Item 21 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1723)

Chair Allread thanked Mr. Kessler and Mr. Boyd for attending the 179th Meeting of the INPC. This site will mean a lot to the people of the State of Illinois.

179-22) McHenry Co. – Buffer Addition to Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal for final dedication of a buffer addition to Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve. The McHenry County Conservation District proposes to dedicate 17.21 acres as nature preserve buffer as an addition to Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve. A portion of the proposed nature preserve lies within a larger wetland basin recognized by the INAI as Detrana Fen (#1557). The proposed Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve is located within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. Five natural plant communities support 268 native plant species including the state-endangered green-fruited burreed (*Sparganium chlorocarpum*). The proposed 90.02- acre Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve is part of a 225-acre tract conveyed to The Nature Conservancy and the McHenry County Conservation District in 1999 by the Herz, Kessler, Lehman, Mecklenburger, Morris, Radov, Scholzman, and Weinberg families (the owners of Fel-Pro). The site was referred to by these families as the Fel-Pro Rest, Relaxation, and Recreation Ranch, hence the triple R designation. The balance of the site, and portions of the proposed Nature Preserve, will offer outdoor educational opportunities for the public and children enrolled in programs offered by Metropolitan Family Services. The Commission conferred preliminary approval for dedication of this site at its 178th Meeting in February, 2003 (Resolution #1701).

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Flemal, and carried, with Drucker abstaining, that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants final approval for the dedication of a buffer addition to Fel-Pro Triple R Fen Nature Preserve in McHenry County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 22 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1724)

179-23) Effingham Co. – Rock Cave Nature Preserve, Highway/Nature Preserve Erosion Control Project

Randy Heidorn stated that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) came to the Commission in the spring of 2002, because heavy rains saturated the embankment of Highway 128 that borders Rock Cave Nature Preserve. This resulted in the embankment collapsing into the ditch and onto the Nature Preserve. Rock Cave Nature Preserve is owned by the IDNR.

Gary Welton, representing IDOT, stated that the IDOT proposes to implement erosion control measures involving the placement of a pipe and reshaping the embankment. This will help protect the Nature Preserve from erosion and sedimentation, and repair a serious driving hazard. A small portion of the repairs will encroach onto the Nature Preserve. He stated that the work will begin as soon as the Commission approves the project.

Commissioner Riddell asked if there are any provisions for inspection by INPC staff during this project.

Mr. Welton stated that there was no such provision, however, one of the first things that will be done before starting the project is to place a temporary fence to keep construction crews from encroaching too far into the Nature Preserve. He stated that such an inspection could be worked out.

Randy Heidorn stated that the DHB has been meeting with Mr. Welton and other staff from IDOT to work out the preconstruction details, and those specifics will be worked into the project design.

It was moved by Schwegman, seconded by Ross-Shannon, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

Approval is given for the erosion control project at Rock Cave Nature Preserve as described in the proposal presented under Item 23 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1725)

179-24) Lake Co. – Illinois Beach Nature Preserve and North Dunes Nature Preserve - Update on Asbestos Investigations and Remediation

Randy Heidorn stated that there has been very little change in the Illinois Beach asbestos situation. The IDNR has developed a plan which includes cleanup of the site. That plan is in the process of being reviewed by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. EPA, and Attorney General's Office. The plan calls for picking up the asbestos as the frost brings it to the surface.

Mr. Heidorn stated that Johns Manville is continuing to work on a groundwater model. He stated that the importance of the industrial canal that separates the Johns Manville property from the southern end of Illinois Beach Nature Preserve is becoming more apparent as a conduit for storm water drainage. If any changes are done within the Johns Manville property, the storm water issue still has to be dealt with. He stated that he will keep the Commission updated on the progress of this issue.

179-25) Vegetation Management Guidelines

Randy Heidorn stated that the Management Guidelines give landowners and managers guidance on how to handle a land management issue in a nature preserve or land and water reserve. Once approved by the Commission, they become part of the policy guidance used by staff to review and approve management plans. Updated Vegetation Management Guidelines for the control of reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and round-leaved bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) and new guidelines for honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) and white mulberry (*Morus alba*) are presented for approval. These revisions were drafted by Eric Smith, Judy Faulkner Dempsey, Debbie Scott Newman and Thomas Lerczak and edited by Mary Kay Solecki and Randy Heidorn. The guidelines were submitted to INPC Consultants and Advisors and to selected natural area land managers for review. Recommended changes were incorporated into the documents.

Mr. Heidorn stated that reed canary grass is a wetland plant found in marshes and forested wetlands, and it was commonly used for erosion control. Reed canary grass is found in many of the disturbed wetlands, and it is very aggressive in natural areas. Reed canary grass is difficult to control. The methods of control include late season fire and hand-pulling of small populations. Control methods in buffer area and severely disturbed sites include burning in combination with spraying the site with glyphosate in June. Application of Rodeo, Amitrol, or Post in early spring before the species is active is another approach.

Mr. Heidorn stated that the habitat for round-leaved bittersweet is roadsides and old home sites. Round-leaved bittersweet is extremely shade tolerant, and it has become a problem across the State. Round-leaved bittersweet covers the ground, eventually shading out ground vegetation. It will then work its way up the trees, eventually killing them. Control methods include hand removal of vines or pulling roots. Complete removal is necessary to be successful. Cutting and treating the stumps with Roundup is another method. Control methods in buffer areas and severely disturbed sites include the same approaches with the addition of foliar treatment with herbicide.

Mr. Heidorn stated that honey locust is a native species, but it does invade open sites. Honey locust is found in a wide range of open land, but it is most common in mesic sites. Honey locust invades prairies, particularly in areas that have been grazed. Control methods do not advocate total eradication. This species should be kept under control to maintain the biodiversity of the site. Control methods include mowing, prescribed burning, cutting or girdling the stems followed by treatment with either Roundup or Garlon 4 and oil. Diesel fuel is not an approved carrier for Garlon 4. Control in buffer areas and severely disturbed sites is the same with the addition of the foliar treatment with Roundup.

Mr. Heidorn stated that white mulberry is found along roadsides, in woods, and old fields. White mulberry is spread by birds, and it can rapidly invade into open areas. White mulberry shades out the herbaceous cover and reduces the fuel in prairies which makes it difficult to carry a fire. The best control methods in high-quality areas is prescribed fire or girdling followed by cutting and herbicide treatment of the cut stems. Control methods in buffer areas or severely disturbed sites is the same as in the high-quality areas with the addition of basal bark treatment or foliar treatment.

It was moved by DeLaurentiis, seconded by Schwegman, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission approves the revised vegetation management guidelines for reed canary grass and round-leaved bittersweet, and the new guidelines for honey locust and white mulberry as presented under Item 25 of the Agenda for the 179th Meeting.

(Resolution 1726)

179-26) Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

There was no public comment.

179-27) Other Business

Carolyn Grosboll stated that two sets of minutes from closed meetings of the Commission were included in the Commissioners' packets. The first meeting was held on August 7, 2001, and the second meeting was held on August 6, 2002. These meetings were closed in accordance with the Open Meetings Act to discuss the purchase of real property. Section 2.06 of the Open Meetings Act provides that public bodies, "shall periodically, but no less than semi-annually, meet to review minutes of all closed sessions. At such meetings, a determination shall be made and reported in an open session that: 1. the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of those minutes, or 2. that the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection." She asked for a motion to determine whether or not the minutes from each meeting should be kept closed.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Drucker, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the closed session minutes from the August 7, 2001, and August 6, 2002, meetings will remain confidential but will be reviewed semi-annually to ascertain the need to be kept confidential.

(Resolution 1727)

Carolyn Grosboll stated that the next item relates to a sewer line connection request at Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve in Rock Island County. Information relating to this topic was distributed to the Commissioners.

Kelly Neal stated that the City of Rock Island contacted the Commission approximately a week ago requesting permission to connect a sewer line from a residence across the street from the Nature Preserve to an existing line approximately 50 feet within the Nature Preserve. Currently, the septic system at the residence has failed. The neighbor's property area is not large enough for a new septic system that would be up to current code. There is raw sewage flowing over the ground and into a creek that flows into the Nature Preserve which is a public health and environmental threat. She stated that, after review of this issue by City staff, the best solution would be to allow them to connect to the line within the Nature Preserve. The City of Rock Island Public Works Department is not certain of the path, however, they feel it would be approximately 50-100 feet into the Nature Preserve through a somewhat degraded area. Anne Mankowski, the DHB for this area, has visited the site, and she did not see any problems with putting a sewer line through that area. Ms. Neal stated that she did not know the diameter of the proposed sewer line. She stated that she was advised that the sewer line was installed in the early 1930s, and the Public Works Department does not have much information on the line. The Public Works Department indicated that they do not expect to have to remove any trees, and they predict minimal impact to the Nature Preserve. It has been requested that the Public Works Department reseed the area of impact with native vegetation. This sewer line extension would be to only one home. The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, which owns the Nature Preserve, has contacted the INPC, and they advised that they did not have any problems with this project.

Commissioner Ross-Shannon asked if INPC staff would be monitoring this sewer extension project.

Ms. Neal stated that the Public Works Department has supplied the Commission with a preliminary line drawing. Someone from the IDNR or the INPC will be present when this line is installed.

Commissioner Sommerhof asked if there would be other homes developed in this area in the future which would require the connection to this sewer line.

Ms. Neal stated that the main reason why the sewer line is the best option in this case is because of the property boundaries. The septic system that is currently there was probably appropriate at the time of the construction of that home, but it is no longer up to current code. She stated that she does not know if there is further development proposed.

Commissioner Drucker stated that it is human nature to solve a problem by finding the easiest solution for the person with the problem. The diagram shows that the quickest connection to the sewer is to go across the street. By taking the sewer line to the south, there would be no encroachment upon the Nature Preserve.

Ms. Neal stated that the Public Works Department did not discuss this option with her, but she could go back to them to discuss this option.

John Nelson stated that often times, in these situations, the Commission asks for an alternatives analysis.

Randy Heidorn stated that the Commission should keep in mind that there is an ongoing environmental problem occurring because of the raw sewage. He felt that it was an advantage to the Nature Preserve not to unduly delay the correction of this problem.

Commissioner Riddell asked if the occupants of the house had stopped using the septic system.

Mr. Heidorn stated that the occupants are probably using the septic system to some degree because they are still living in the house.

It was moved by Ross-Shannon, seconded by Flemal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission staff will explore all other alternative solutions and cost analysis for connection to the sewer line prior to approving the City of Rock Island Public Works Department request to encroach upon Black Hawk Forest Nature Preserve to connect the sewer line.

(Resolution 1728)

Chair Allread stated that Dr. Brian Anderson requested that Carolyn Grosboll be a part of the Office of Resource Conservation Executive Staff level meetings, and the Commission would like to acknowledge this. The Commission would like Ms. Grosboll to take part in this, and she thanked Dr. Anderson for making that suggestion.

Chair Allread thanked the Burpee Museum for hosting the 179th Meeting of the INPC, and she expressed appreciation to the NLI for the 40th Anniversary Celebration.

179-28) Adjournment

It was moved by Sommerhof, seconded by Flemal, and unanimously approved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

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